



MENTAL HEALTH

By Lorraine Viade

May is Mental Health Month
But just what does that mean?
Mental health is a state of mind
And the mind cannot be seen
We can look at each other's behavior
And try to figure it out
Mental health is not a diagnosis
It is something we can't live without
For mental health is wellbeing
Of heart and body and mind
Mental health is holistic
And for some not so easy to find
Mental health is a curious phrase
With a very bad reputation
It has been misunderstood in many a land
And across this "United Nation"
Mental health strikes images of fear
To those who do not understand
What mental health truly would be
Is in the outreach of a caring hand
Whether family or friend, therapist or M.D.
We all need to work side by side
To end stereotypes, bad images and hype
And embrace all recovery with pride
The sacrifices that society makes
Is evident in the lives we have lost
Through denial and shame
We are still losing the game
To conditions that leave a soul tossed
Whether out on the street or in homes of abuse
We cannot let no funding become an excuse
Each one of us can be there for someone
A mother, a sister, an infant, a son
The veteran, elderly, addict or manic
The person who lives in fear and in panic
We can be shelter, and we can be care
The very best cure is when someone is there
Someone who won't judge you for the things that you do
A listening ear you can tell secrets to
A person who will act to keep you going
To teach you to cope and to find friendships growing
A person who will be and stay at your side
Who won't permit you to cower and hide

In order to heal we must make peace with the past
In order for our recovery to finally last
So during the Mental Health Month of May
These are my hopes for all who might say
I am lost and afraid, of the dark and the night
You are not alone it might just turn out all right
With a little faith and with hope in your heart
Mental health is not destination
It is the place where we can start
Strengths can be found in every setting
This somehow folks have been forgetting
Focus on the whole being not just the behavior
Higher power could just be the very best savior
No one has the answers; each of us is so unique
We can only ask the questions
The answers are all we seek
They will only be found if we are willing to share
To lift up our loved ones, but do we dare?
Can we let go of our own misperceptions
Long enough to break out of the box
And travel in different directions?
Can we seek solutions to the everyday need?
When hearts are torn open and emotions bleed
Sometimes we fail, sometimes we succeed
Never enough service to meet all of the need

